

DECEPTION

by

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All the magic tricks and deceptions in this show are actually possible. We based them on illusions a real magician could perform. On the next page, we begin with a card trick direct to camera. To prove we're not deceiving you -- here's a video link:
goo.gl/cJrZjY

ACT ONE

FADE IN ON:

A DECK OF CARDS. So close they tower over us. HANDS come into frame and SHUFFLE them. It's amazing. Cards have never moved so fast.

MAGICIAN'S VOICE

When people ask -- what is magic? I usually make something up. But here's the truth: **magic is deception.** Let's start with something simple.

He FANS six cards right up to camera -- **THE KING OF CLUBS, QUEEN OF HEARTS, JACK OF SPADES, KING OF DIAMONDS, QUEEN OF CLUBS, JACK OF HEARTS.**

MAGICIAN'S VOICE (CONT'D)

Pick a card. Point at it. Really, touch the screen. Got it? Good.

Remember: this is a real trick. We all pick one. The magician flips the cards around and TAKES ONE OUT.

MAGICIAN'S VOICE (CONT'D)

Don't forget it. Imagine it in your mind while I... make it disappear.

Whoosh! He reveals the FIVE REMAINING CARDS. And we (along with America) see that **OUR CARD IS GONE!** PAN UP to reveal CAMERON BLACK (30s/40s, handsome, charming, and the world's greatest illusionist.) He stands on a darkened space, the cards shooting between his hands.

CAMERON

Now there are two kinds of deception. There's this, where I trick you using skills mastered over thousands of hours.

(he shoots a card around his body)

Then there's the other kind of deception, where you trick yourself. We all do it. *Today's going to be better than yesterday. Is it? That argument with your wife last night, it was all her fault. It wasn't. I don't need to go to the doctor, I'm fine.*

(catching the last cards)

Go to the doctor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

We PULL BACK FURTHER revealing a HUGE HIGH GLOSS FLOOR. Cameron SHOOTS the cards at us. They whip past camera.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

We play these tricks on ourselves everyday. Our minds bend reality to make it what we want it to be, what we need it to be. Or simply to make it all make sense.

Finally, the camera stops. We see how the cards landed -- in TWO PERFECTLY STRAIGHT LINES! *That's impossible, right?*

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Even when it doesn't.

He raises his palm and the cards RISE UP INTO THE AIR! Cameron climbs this LEVITATING STAIRCASE to--

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Ladies and Gentlemen -- I'm Cameron Black. Welcome to my show!

-- A STAGE. He throws out his arms. The LIGHTS COME UP! REVEALING a **GIANT LAS VEGAS THEATER**. AN AUDIENCE OF THOUSANDS CHEERS. TV CAMERAS swoop around him. They PUSH IN on that handsome face.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Welcome to--

We TITLE UP -- "DECEPTION."

INT. BACKSTAGE - LAS VEGAS THEATER - NIGHT

PAs rush past as Techs peel off Cameron's jacket. He switches outfits in a flash. DINA CLARK (late 20s/early 30s, former showgirl, makeup whiz/producer) does touch-ups.

CAMERON

Tell me, you're shocked by how well this is going. I'm a phenomenal talent, a once-in-a-generation magician. It's obvious, isn't it?

DINA

Focus, Cameron. We've still got the finale. Jordan gave you the new cues, right?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAMERON

You know, a little positive reinforcement from time to time would be nice.

DINA

With your ego?

CAMERON

I like a pep talk.

GUNTER (V.O.)

CAMERON!

GUNTER GUSTAFSEN (40s, maybe 50s. Vegas people are hard to pin down) pushes past the techs. He's ripped with glistening, tanned muscles. A Viking in love with bronzer.

CAMERON

Gunter, great! Tell me, you're shocked by how well this is going. I'm a phenomenal talent, a--

GUNTER

(pissed)

My safety check for the finale was cut short. If just one of those blow torches is off by a centimeter you know what happens...

CAMERON

Nope, not a good pep talk.

DINA

Wait. What are you saying?

GUNTER

He could fall and die.

CAMERON

That won't happen. Don't worry.

DINA

Don't worry? I'm the producer. Why didn't you tell me?

GUNTER

I did. He asks for the impossible!

CAMERON

What do I always say? *Nothing is impossible.*

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CAMERON (CONT'D)

I come up with the trick, you yell, you scream, then you lock yourself in your workshop for a few months and -- voilà -- it's possible.

GUNTER

Don't you voilà me! Jordan, is he set? Macht schnell.

JORDAN MONROE (20s, a street magician from Chicago) checks the secret hooks under Cameron's jacket. He's always cool.

JORDAN

Easy with the German, man. He's good to go.

(quietly to Cameron)

Hey. If you do die, can I have your original Buried Alive poster?

CAMERON

Okay, team meeting tomorrow, we all need to discuss positive reinforcement. Our pep talks suck.

INT. LAS VEGAS ARENA - MOMENTS LATER

The crowd quiets. GIANT SCREENS punch in close on Cameron as STAGEHANDS lock him in STAINLESS STEEL MANACLES.

CAMERON

Tonight, my final trick is inspired by one of the greats. I will free myself from these chains two hundred feet above you. The same escape Harry Houdini performed in New York a hundred years ago.

The stage transforms, the giant video screens cut to LIVE FOOTAGE of TIMES SQUARE and another BIG AUDIENCE.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Hello, New York!

(the New Yorkers CHEER)

But with all respect to Harry, I'm upping the difficulty level. I'll be blindfolded. And we've attached blowtorches to the wires. If I don't get out before they melt, well, you'll have a heck of a story for the grandkids.

CUT TO:

(CONTINUED)

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MOMENTS LATER. A CRANE raises Cameron above the audience. THREE CABLES hold him in place. ROBOTIC BLOWTORCHES are posed above each cable. Cameron's mic'd up. Everyone hears:

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Gunter -- I'm ready.

THREE HUNDRED FEET BELOW HIM -- Gunter punches codes into a control panel. Jordan's behind him, watching Cameron. Gunter hits the final switch and **THE ESCAPE BEGINS!**

ABOVE THEM -- the ROBOTIC TORCHES ACTIVATE. They're amazing flamethrowers. Cameron begins to writhe about, working on the restraints. The audience hears him struggle. Quickly, he's got an arm out. The crowd cheers! He peels off the blindfold. Another cheer. Everything's going as--

KA-CHUNK!!! A terrible metal sound. A ROBOTIC TORCH snaps out of place. It's too close to the wire. Melting it too fast.

GUNTER

Cameron! I'm stopping this.

CAMERON

Don't! I still got it.

The audience starts to freak out. The NEW YORK crowd looks tense. Gunter eyes Dina. Everyone else looks up at --

CAMERON, with both arms out. He flips around so he's hanging from the manacles. He reaches for a LADDER. His lifeline. His hand is inches away when -- SNAP!!! -- the first cable breaks. *Whoom!* The whole apparatus starts to spin. Whipping Cameron around.

The AUDIENCE stares. The only sound is the air they collectively inhale as Cameron reaches for the ladder.

SNAP! The second wire goes. He's down to only one. The spin picks up speed. He's got one last chance. He whips around. Almost to the ladder. He reaches out and --

IN SUPER SLOW MOTION -- his FINGERS touch the rung -- his eyes bulge as -- **THEY SLIP.**

He FALLS. Toward the stage. 200 FEET DOWN! DINA. GUNTER. JORDAN. BOTH AUDIENCES. THEY ALL WATCH AS--

CAMERON HITS A GIANT SCREEN AND IT **EXPLODES!!!**

People stand. Others cover their eyes. GUNTER and JORDAN rush up with extinguishers. The house lights come on.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Voices scream for help. "Call 9-1-1! Get a doctor!" It's becoming obvious -- Cameron Black just died.

EXT. TIMES SQUARE, NEW YORK - SAME

For the record: we're 2,248 miles away. The crowd freaks. They just saw this tragedy. A WOMAN cries in the front row. Parents cover their children's eyes. No one can believe it.

Then something amazing happens. All around Times Square -- the JUMBOTRONS click off in unison. THE SCREEN CLOSEST TO THE CROWD lights up. CAMERON appears, walking toward camera.

CAMERON

There's a word magicians don't use anymore. But I've always wanted to try it. Ladies and Gentlemen, TA--

He doesn't stop. He STEPS THROUGH the screen and into the middle of Times Square! The crowd can't believe it. *He's really here!* Cameron looks into the camera:

CAMERON (CONT'D)

-DAH!

BACK IN VEGAS -- the audience looks up at the live feed from Times Square. *He's really there!* On stage -- JORDAN and GUNTER slap hands. *Nice.* DINA smiles, watching the crowd.

IN NEW YORK -- Cameron takes a final bow.

INT. NEW YORK ROOFTOP CLUB - NIGHT

Music pulses. Lights strobe. Dancers blur into one another. Cameron throws back drinks. He looks like he wants to be alone. His phone vibrates. He checks it: DINA's calling.

WOMAN'S VOICE

I saw your show. How'd you do it?

CAMERON

(curt)

It's magic, lady. Can't reveal my secrets.

He turns. This MYSTERY WOMAN (20s) is gorgeous. He glances at his phone and hits DECLINE on Dina's call.

MYSTERY WOMAN

Really? You can't tell me anything?
I'm such a big fan.

She WHISPERS in his ear. It must be good because we CUT TO:

EXT. NEW YORK STREETS - NIGHT

It's 3 A.M. A YELLOW LAMBORGHINI rockets through the deserted streets of the Financial District.

INT. CAMERON'S LAMBORGHINI - SAME

Cameron drives. The MYSTERY WOMAN kisses his neck. Her hair draping over him. Cameron loves it. He takes a turn. Then glances at her. The street lights reflect off HER EYES. They're two different colors - ONE BLUE, ONE GREEN.

CAMERON

Your eyes... they're different colors.

A HORN SCREAMS. Cameron SEES A TRUCK. Slams his brakes. SCREEEEEECH!!!! The car SPINS. The Mystery Woman shoots out of her seat. They HIT the truck. Air bags explode. Cameron's KNOCKED OUT cold.

CUT TO:

INT. CAMERON'S VEGAS PENTHOUSE - MORNING

Cameron wakes up in a stupid-big bed. *Was that a dream?* His place is opulent, a high-rise penthouse with a view of The Strip. *Knock-knock-knock.* Someone's banging on his door.

CAMERON

Do not disturb! It says "Do not disturb!"

(getting up)

C'mon, respect the sign.

The knocking gets more intense. CRACK! His door flies open. COPS charge in. Guns drawn. They throw him down.

COPS

Get down, get on the floor!

CAMERON

What is this? What happened?

DETECTIVE

You smashed up your Lambo in New York last night. Did you really think you could run from that?

CAMERON

(shit, not again)

Wait -- relax! Whatever happened, I can handle it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DETECTIVE
What about her?

He puts a PHOTO in Cameron's face. That's him in New York near the wrecked sports car. A WOMAN'S BODY on the ground.

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)
The woman you killed. You're under arrest. Cuff him.

CAMERON
Wait. Stop. *It's not...*

But he can't say it -- revealing this is HUGE.

DETECTIVE
It's not what? Tell me now or...

CAMERON
(a deep breath, then--)
The man in the photo. It's not me.

DETECTIVE
You're lying. That's you, look!

CAMERON
No... it's my brother.
(the Detective hesitates)
My twin. **Jonathan** Black.

We PUSH IN on Cameron. He CLOSES HIS EYES. CUT TO:

MONTAGE OF NEWS REPORTS

NETWORK ANCHORS and "BREAKING NEWS" graphics barrage us--

ANCHOR #1
Earlier today, New York police arrested a man in connection to last night's fatal supercar crash.

ANCHOR #2
He's been identified as Jonathan Black. The twin brother of illusionist Cameron Black.

ANCHOR #3
The secret is out -- for decades, Cameron and Jonathan Black lived as one person. Until tragedy struck.

ANCHOR #4
Jonathan Black helped his brother mount countless escapes. Now, can he escape from a conviction?

INT. PRISON VISITING ROOM - MORNING

JONATHAN BLACK sits behind glass in a prison jumpsuit. He's quiet, tense, the emotional opposite of his brother. Across from him is Cameron in his leather jacket freaking out--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAMERON

It's everywhere. Everyone knows. We keep a secret for thirty years and it falls apart in a night.

JONATHAN

It's not what they're saying.

CAMERON

Why did you run? Running from an accident makes it worse.

JONATHAN

It wasn't an accident.

CAMERON

A woman's dead.

JONATHAN

I know. But it's the wrong woman.

(off Cameron's confusion)

The woman in the car with me -- she had different color eyes.

We FLASH to the supercar and the MYSTERY WOMAN with DIFFERENT COLOR EYES. Then WHAM! They hit the truck.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

After the wreck, I found her. There was blood and... I tried to save her. What you're supposed to do.

More FLASHES -- Jonathan struggles out of the car... there's the WOMAN crumpled up on the pavement. He runs to her.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

She was already dead. Her eyes, though, were open. Staring up at me. That's when I saw...

A FLASH of Jonathan moving the hair from her BLOODY FACE -- he freezes, seeing -- she has BROWN EYES.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

They were the same color. She wasn't the woman from the car. This body... it was a different woman.

CAMERON

What?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JONATHAN

That's why I ran. I knew it wasn't an accident. I was set up.

CAMERON

(confused)

There was a car crash... a body... who... who could do that?

JONATHAN

An illusionist. Like us.

CAMERON

Why would someone do this to you?

JONATHAN

Think. No one knew I existed. They weren't after me. They were after **you.**

(off Cameron's disbelief)

Look at me. You know me better than anyone else. Am I lying?

Cameron stares at his brother. *He's not lying.*

CAMERON

I'll get you out. *I promise.*

EXT. PRISON - LATER

Cameron exits SMACK INTO A MOB OF REPORTERS. He recoils. The first image in a --

MONTAGE OF NEWS REPORTS

MEDIA FACES and TRIAL FOOTAGE compress months into seconds. LAWYERS question JONATHAN. CAMERON watches in the audience.

NEWSCASTER

The People v. Jonathan Black has quickly become world news. The details are shocking.

FAMOUS MAGICIAN

We had no idea there were two of them. People love a good trick. But they hate being lied to.

LEGAL EXPERT

Jonathan Black claims the accident was a set up and he's being framed for murder--

NEWSCASTER

-- today the jury disagreed and convicted him of involuntary manslaughter.

We CUT TO JONATHAN hearing the verdict. His head drops. The montage ends with CAMERON on the COURTHOUSE STEPS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAMERON

My brother Jonathan is innocent. He told the truth. Someone did this to him. I don't know who. I don't know why. **But I will find them.**

The image freezes on CAMERON'S FACE. From this, we FADE INTO--

EXT. 30,000 FEET OVER LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

A LEARJET slips through dark clouds high over Los Angeles.
SUPER: ONE YEAR LATER.

INT. GOVERNMENT JET - SAME

FEDERAL AGENTS in bulletproof vests look tense. FBI SPECIAL AGENT KAY ALVAREZ (30s, hyper intense, just try to get under her skin) is in charge. To her men:

KAY

Prep the team at Van Nuys. Full detail. We don't stop for anybody.

She takes her seat. Across from her -- FELIX RUIZ (40s, rugged, strong, with intense eyes) sits in a prison jumpsuit. Even in full restraints, he looks dangerous.

FELIX

I've never had the pleasure,
Special Agent. You are...?
(she ignores him so he
switches to Spanish)
*Why don't you talk to me? We should
get to know each other.*

KAY

(in Spanish)
*I'm sure you've heard this: you
have the right to remain silent.*

FELIX

That's a Norte accent... where are
you from? Baja?

KAY

(leaning in)
Let's talk about you, Felix. You're
one of the Sinaloa Cartel's most
feared commanders. You don't make
mistakes. You don't get arrested by
the FBI. Why are you really here?

Now Felix goes silent. Kay sits back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAY (CONT'D)

Doesn't matter. You're spending the rest of your life in a six-by-eight cell. Think of it as your coffin, I'm putting you in early.

EXT. AIRFIELD/HANGAR - LATER

A CARAVAN of BLACK SUVs wait. The LEARJET taxis into a well-lit hangar. TWENTY GUARDS in full tactical gear surround the plane. Machine-guns, smoke grenades, body armor. The cabin door opens and Kay exits. Checks the hangar. AGENT MIKE DANIELS (40s, classic FBI) waits near the SUVs.

MIKE

How's our guest, Kay?

KAY

Talkative. Let's get him tucked in.

INT. HANGAR - SAME

An FBI GUARD near the plane sees something strange. A blinking light on the smoke grenade attached to his chest. *What the...?* BOOM! It EXPLODES, knocking him backward. RED SMOKE shoots everywhere as he struggles to--

FBI GUARD

Get it off! Get it off!!!

Oh fuck! The other guards check their grenades. BOOM-BOOM-BOOM! THEY EXPLODE! Each man rockets backward. RED SMOKE envelops them and the hangar.

Kay races in. Drawing her gun. She yells to the FLIGHT CREW--

KAY

Secure the plane!

The CREW MEMBER inside pulls the door shut. The plane is engulfed in RED SMOKE. Kay spins around. Mike's next to her. Everything else is hidden. More grenades explode. Guards scream for help. That's when--

THE GUNFIRE STARTS. The whole place explodes into a terrifying gunfight. Muzzle blasts strobe in the smoke. No one can see anything. Kay screams into her walkie:

KAY (CONT'D)

Stand down! The plane is loaded with gas! Stop firing!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KA-BOOM! THE PLANE EXPLODES. A giant fireball erupts inside all that red smoke. Kay and Mike are thrown. They scramble to their feet. There's the OUTLINE of the plane in the smoke. A contorted mass of metal. Utterly destroyed!

EXT. HANGAR - CONTINUOUS

Everyone rushes out. Turning back, Kay stares in shock as the HANGAR BURNS. *What the hell just happened?*

CUT TO:

INT. DIVE BAR (NORTHEAST TARZANA) - MORNING

CAMERON BLACK, currently unconscious, lying facedown on a bar. Playing cards cover the floor. The BARTENDER (60s, appropriately salty) turns on the MORNING NEWS. Cameron jerks awake, a SIX OF CLUBS stuck to his face.

BARTENDER

(dry)

I give you Cameron Black. Greatest bar magician who ever lived.

CAMERON

(getting his bearings)

How did they get the bar into my bedroom?

The Bartender hands him a COFFEE.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Thank you.

(peeling the card off)

Ah. Was this your card?

BARTENDER

Six of Clubs. You're incredible.

CAMERON

I've never woken up in a bar before. This isn't a good sign.

BARTENDER

Don't worry. Your friend called your cell.

CAMERON

Dina? You didn't tell her where I was, did you?

(off his grim look)

She's already here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Cameron winces. Turns to find a disappointed DINA.

DINA
What happened?

CAMERON
I would call it... a magic bender.

DINA
You disappeared two weeks ago!

CAMERON
One of my private detectives called from Paris. A team of thieves made an armored car disappear in the middle of the Champs-Élysées. Like, vhoom. I booked the next flight out. But the thieves were gone. The police were baffled. I looked on my own but there was no sign of Jonathan's illusionist.

DINA
That's twenty-three trips in twelve months. You've traveled the world looking for this guy.

CAMERON
Don't worry, I flew business class.

DINA
You need to get back to work.

CAMERON
Not while Jonathan's in prison.

DINA
(a beat)
I get it. I miss him, too.

CAMERON
Really? After what he did...

DINA
What'd I expect?

CAMERON
That he not cheat on you. Or crash a Lamborghini while cheating. Or start a media fire storm exposing his identity and infidelity at the same time!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DINA

(resigned)

Fall for a magician and you fall
for all their tricks.

(firm)

You still need a show.

CAMERON

Nobody wants me. After New York,
every magic show in Vegas dropped
by twenty percent. Variety called
me *The Man Who Killed Magic*. Teller
threatened to cut off my thumbs if
I returned to Vegas. And he never
speaks! I'm in exile. In Tarzana!

DINA

Yes. Things are bad. But they'll
get better. You need a comeback!

(a beat)

I have to tell the team something.
They're getting other offers.

CAMERON

What? *Who?*

DINA

Criss Angel, Takayama. Even David.

CAMERON

Copperfield! They can't leave me
for him. Not David!

DINA

They need a magician with a show.

CAMERON

Tell them I'm coming up with new
ideas. Exciting stuff. I'm
committed. No more distractions.

(immediately distracted)

What's that?

On the TV, LOCAL NEWS plays helicopter footage of the HANGAR
FIRE. RED SMOKE billows from the still burning plane.

BARTENDER

A private jet blew up in Van Nuys.

CAMERON

Yes, but why is there red smoke?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Cameron approaches the TV. It cuts to choppy SURVEILLANCE FOOTAGE from inside the hangar last night. Grenades explode, agents rush around, smoke engulfs the plane.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

It was a Learjet 350. The eight-seater. We used a 350 for the ABC special. And red smoke.

DINA

You want to do another special?

CAMERON

No. Where's the volume?

He jumps up on the bar--

BARTENDER

C'mon -- it's not a stage!

--and turns the sound up.

NEWSCASTER (ON THE TV)

FBI sources tell us the flight crew and a high-value prisoner in the drug war were killed in the attack. There were injuries on the ground. But -- remarkably -- no fatalities.

CAMERON

That plane carries 15,000 pounds of fuel. The explosion should have killed everyone. There should be dead bodies everywhere. Unless -- someone wanted them alive.

DINA

Why?

CAMERON

They needed an audience.

INT. BURNED-OUT HANGAR - LATER

There's PLANE WRECKAGE everywhere. FBI AGENTS and NTSB TECHS pick through it. Mike reports to Kay, lost in thought--

MIKE

No sign of the bodies yet. NTSB says it could be a few hours. I'm sorry, Kay. Know this one meant a lot.

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CONTINUED:

KAY

This is wrong. The grenades, the
red smoke, the plane -- it's...

She scans the wreckage and -- sees something. No, SOMEONE.

KAY (CONT'D)

... unbelievable.

REVEAL -- Cameron Black, walking around a crime scene in DARK
SUNGLASSES. Kay and Mike head through the wreckage --

KAY (CONT'D)

Excuse me... **who are you?**

CAMERON

Don't worry about me. I was in
Tarzana and thought I'd stop by.

KAY

This is an active crime scene.

Cameron takes off his sunglasses. Mike freezes.

MIKE

(in shock)

You're Cameron Black.

CAMERON

Hello.

KAY

The magician? What are you doing
here?

CAMERON

(holding his hands out
like a director might)

Looking for the proscenium. The
perfect frame to view an illusion.
You were standing here, right?

(Kay nods)

What I'm about to say will be
shocking -- your plane didn't blow
up. It disappeared.

KAY

That's impossible.

CAMERON

Nothing's impossible!

(off Kay's death-stare)

Sorry. It's sort of my catchphrase.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KAY
That's really great. But I lost my
plane, my prisoner, and my flight
crew. Mike, can you--

MIKE
(still in shock)
He's Cameron Black.

KAY
I don't care. Get him out of here.

CAMERON
Wait. You must have seen my ABC
special.
(Kay shakes her head)
Really? The ratings were--

KAY
Goodbye, Mr. Black.

CAMERON
(as Mike takes his arm)
I made a plane disappear on live
television! I know how they did it!

The other AGENTS and INVESTIGATORS look over.

KAY
(a beat)
Show me.

Cameron takes out a deck of cards (which he always has.)

CAMERON
Excellent. Now I'll need a
volunteer from the audience.

Mike almost raises his hand. He *really* likes magic.

KAY
We don't have time for magic.

CAMERON
Not magic. Illusion. I learned this
trick when I was five.

Cameron shows Mike the deck, reveals the top card, places it
back down. Swipes his hand over it and reveals the card again
-- it's a new card. Mike smiles.

MIKE
It's different!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CAMERON

It's called a deck flip. If my hand wasn't in the way, you'd see this.

In a blink -- Cameron FLIPS the deck in his palm.

MIKE

Whoa -- you ruined the trick. You gotta warn us or--

KAY

Keep going.

CAMERON

Last night, someone performed a deck flip with an airplane. The plane was the top card. The smoke and fire were my hand and the wreckage, all this, was the reveal.

KAY

You're saying someone swapped out a twenty ton airplane with fake wreckage in, what, minutes?

Cameron climbs into the wreckage. He drops to the floor.

CAMERON

They slid it. It was on a platform. Wipe the fire-retardant off and you'll see grooves in the floor.

MIKE

But we saw the plane explode.

CAMERON

You saw an explosion. That was pyrotechnics. A gas bomb with a black powder trigger -- to give you that big fireball effect. Ka-boom! The plane... it was already gone. You see I'm right?

KAY

No, I don't. There's only one way in or out of this hangar and last night twenty FBI agents were blocking it. Including me.

CAMERON

Right. Good. Let me ask a question you're not going to know the answer to: What is illusion?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Nobody knows. Cameron turns and walks toward the FAR WALL. Everyone follows. Cameron grabs a SLEDGEHAMMER from a trolley.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Illusion is misdirection. Forcing the audience to look one way while the real trick happens somewhere else. *This* was the real trick. A secret door! Ta-dah!

BAM! He hits the wall with the sledgehammer. It makes a terrible noise and it definitely does not fall down.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

(pushing on the wall)

I prematurely Ta-dah'd. Hm. Perhaps the door melted shut.

(offering Mike the hammer)

Would you mind?

Kay nods to Mike. He takes the SLEDGEHAMMER. And nails the wall. *Whoomp!* A GIANT SQUARE SECTION FALLS. Revealing an improvised DOOR just big enough for a plane.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

That's how you make a plane disappear.

Kay and Mike share a look. She whirls around to the agents:

KAY

Get me air traffic control, tower logs, and alert local police. This is now a manhunt for Felix Ruiz.

Everyone moves. Kay glances at Cameron. *He's smiling.*

CAMERON

The red smoke. A Learjet 350. It's like he's calling me out.

(off her confusion)

The illusionist who framed my brother for murder. He made the plane disappear.

(walking off)

You're after a drug dealer, I'm after the magician who helped him get away. Now let's go find your plane!

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. FBI HQ - OFFICE - DAY

Kay briefs her boss, Special Agent-in-Charge STEVE DEAKINS (40s, smart, an unflappable pro). Right now -- he's in shock.

STEVE

Let me get this straight. We lost a plane. We lost Felix Ruiz. And we know that because a magician told us. Just stop me when I say something really crazy.

KAY

(going through a FILE)
Cameron Black made the same size plane disappear on network TV two years ago. He wants to help. I think we should use him.

STEVE

You want a magician to consult?

KAY

He's a credible source. Why not?

INT. FBI HQ - BULLPEN - INTERCUT

Outside Steve's office -- Cameron takes a PEN CUP off a desk. A SMALL CROWD of FBI AGENTS waits.

CAMERON

For my next trick, I want you to sign one card, don't let me see. Then put them back into the deck.

IN STEVE'S OFFICE -- KAY'S BOSS IS SKEPTICAL.

STEVE

Kay. You're my best agent, you see things nobody else does. That's why I put you on Felix. The benefits outweighed the conflicts.

KAY

I don't have any--

STEVE

Let me finish: do you have clear eyes on this?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAY

Felix has been off grid for eight hours. If Cameron Black can help me find him, he's worth it.

STEVE

Okay. But keep him in check.

KAY

(leaving)

Don't worry, I can handle him.

She stops at the door, seeing --

THE BULLPEN -- TWENTY AGENTS surround Cameron.

CAMERON

Last but not least -- Sean's card!

He reaches into his mouth and takes out a card. Everyone claps. Then the agents see Kay and scatter.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Ah, Special Agent Alvarez.

KAY

(holding out her hand)

The cards.

(he hands them over)

All of them.

Cameron hands over three more decks. She waits. And two more decks out of nowhere. Then she moves. They walk-and-talk:

KAY (CONT'D)

You think the people that helped Felix escape framed your brother for murder.

CAMERON

I'm not certain. But how many criminal illusionists can there be?

KAY

Okay, here's how this works -- You do what I say when I say it. You're here to consult. That's it.

They come to a door marked "Situation Room."

KAY (CONT'D)

And no magic.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CAMERON

That won't be a problem.
(another AGENT walks by)
Oh Dan! Here's your card.

INT. FBI HQ - SITUATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cameron and Kay find NTSB, FBI, and DEA agents breaking down the case. Screens display the airport and the hangar.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR

We think the plane took off. They must have deactivated the transponder. Stayed under radar. We're still looking for them.

Kay nods to a seat in back. Cameron finds a FELIX RUIZ CASE FOLDER and quickly scans through it.

DEA AGENT

C'mon, guys. Felix Ruiz is in South America by now. He's gone.

STEVE

Kay. What do you think?

KAY

Why would he run? Intel tells us Felix had been on the wrong side of a Cartel power struggle. He was in trouble back home.

(thinking it through)

What if getting arrested, the plane, the hangar... what if it was all part of his plan?

DEA AGENT

To do what?

KAY

Disappear. A man like Felix can't simply go on the run... not with the Cartel and us searching for him. He'd be looking over his shoulder for the rest of his life. No, to get away clean...

STEVE

--everyone has to think he's dead. The Cartel and us. What else would he need?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAY
Money. Lots of it.

Kay grabs a keyboard. A new picture pops up on the screens.
DOMINIC PRINCE, a severe-looking criminal/businessman.

KAY (CONT'D)
Three days ago, we intercepted an
encoded text between Felix's group
and this man -- Dominic Prince.
Prince controls the Cartel's
offshore accounts. He's here in Los
Angeles. Felix wanted to meet.

DEA AGENT
But that didn't happen. He flew
away on *your* plane.

KAY
What if he didn't? What if he's
still here?

DEA AGENT
Then where's the plane?

CAMERON (O.S.)
They drove it away.

All eyes shoot to Cameron staring at a BIG MAP.

CAMERON (CONT'D)
Sorry, thinking aloud.

STEVE
What is it, Mr. Black?

CAMERON
The problem with making a plane
disappear isn't the illusion, it's
where to hide it. Planes are...
big. But the frontage road behind
the hangar and this industrial
district all have enough clearance.

DEA AGENT
(incredulous)
They drove it away?

KAY
(checking the map)
It's worth a look.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STEVE

Run it down.

Cameron surreptitiously slips the FELIX FILE into his jacket as Kay approaches.

KAY

If they drove the plane away, somebody saw it. Grab your cape. We gotta find them.

CAMERON

Cape? No one wears capes! They're not cool. Literally, you sweat right through them!

INT. KAY'S CAR - LATER

Kay drives. *Vhpt-vhpt*. Cameron shuffles a deck of cards.

KAY

So. How'd you do it?

CAMERON

You left them on your desk.

KAY

No, your brother and you, living as one person. How'd you do *that*?

CAMERON

We started young. In our father's magic show. The Great Sebastian Black. We were The Disappearing-Reappearing Boy.

KAY

Which one were you?

CAMERON

I can't ruin the trick, Kay.

(off her look)

I'll say this. I was the front of house persona. A five year old impresario. Jonathan was my shadow, always hidden. The finale was amazing. We'd race around the theater, our father making us appear and disappear. We traveled the world with it...

KAY

Sounds like a tough way to grow up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAMERON

It was an adventure.

KAY

Without a home? Or friends?

Cameron looks out the window -- a heavy beat.

CAMERON

I had Jonathan.

KAY

What happened to him?

CAMERON

We built our show around the trick.
Shared our success. But he started
to change. There were arguments.
Then fights. Then--

KAY

The accident in New York.

CAMERON

(changing the subject)
Can I ask you a question?
(Kay shrugs, sure)
Have you really never seen my show?
Part of a special? A Youtube clip?

KAY

It's not you. I don't like magic.

CAMERON

(shocked)
You don't like -- magic?

KAY

Nope.

Off Cameron -- *Kay just said the most insane thing ever!*

INT. DINER - LATER

A classic Valley diner. The lunch rush is on. Booths are packed with a collage of Southern Californians. The MANAGER (40s, busy, sweaty) talks to Kay. She thanks him and joins Cameron at the booth.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAY

(re: her notes)

That's two convenience stores and a diner. No one saw our disappearing jet. Maybe it did take off.

She looks up. Cameron's staring at her like she's an alien.

KAY (CONT'D)

What -- what is it?

CAMERON

How can someone not like magic?

KAY

(huh?)

I just don't.

CAMERON

We're not talking about clowns or country music. This is magic. Everyone loves magic.

KAY

Cameron. I'm an FBI agent. My dad was a cop. His dad was a cop. We spend our lives trying to solve mysteries. The idea of someone fooling us and it being fun... it's not. It's work.

Kay looks around the packed restaurant. WAITRESSES and BUSSERS rush between tables.

KAY (CONT'D)

I don't get it. This is the perfect place. It's open all night. Windows face the airport. If they drove the plane away, someone here saw it. There should be a witness.

CAMERON

What if I did a trick for you?

KAY

I told you -- no magic.

CAMERON

A small trick? You'll love it.

(she shakes her head)

There's nothing like really good magic. It's like great sex.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KAY

(huh?)

We're not talking about this.

CAMERON

It's intimate. Climactic. When I'm performing, I can tell what everyone in my audience is thinking. Who's happy, who's sad, who's getting divorced. They let down their guard. Their faces reveal everything.

That gets Kay's attention.

KAY

Okay, Cameron. A magic trick. But not for me. For them.

(re: the restaurant)

Can you do that?

Cameron grins -- *of course I can!* He jumps to his feet:

CAMERON

Ladies and Gentlemen! Yes, it's me. I'm working on a new magic special and I need an audience. Now--
(jumping on the counter)
Who wants to see a trick?

CUT TO:

MOMENTS LATER. Everyone watches -- the PATRONS, WAITSTAFF, COOKS and MANAGER. People sit on the back of booths. Trying to get a better look at -- CAMERON, currently BLINDFOLDED, juggles GIANT KITCHEN KNIVES. They're already clapping and laughing. He catches the last knife.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Alright, alright -- that wasn't the trick. Just unnecessary danger.

Kay watches from her booth. Cameron's not lying. He is amazing. But her eyes don't stay on the show. She scans the crowd as he continues --

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Now you each have a playing card. For your safety, please place your card in front of you. Move your hands away. Alright -- I'm looking for the Queen of Clubs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

He turns around, everyone waits and then -- WHOOSH! Cameron throws a knife at one table. It pierces the card. The DWP LINEMAN sitting next to it freezes in his seat.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Your card?

DWP LINEMAN

Queen of Clubs!

Everyone cheers! Kay keeps her eyes on the crowd. She notices a BUSSEER staring at his feet. His hand shaking. No, he's not watching the show. Cameron -- still blindfolded -- prowls along the bar. Another knife ready.

CAMERON

Next card is -- the Four of
Diamonds. Where are you?

Kay ignores the show, she's watching the distracted Busser. He gets up and heads to--

INT. DINER - KITCHEN - SAME

-- the Busser rushes to the back door.

But KAY stands in his way. The Busser stops. He's nervous.

KAY

Sir, can I ask you a few questions?
(he's going to...)
Don't run. I just want to talk.

And he RUNS --

INT. DINER - SAME

Cameron walks along the bar. One knife left.

CAMERON

My last knife. Let's see -- what
card should I choose?

BEHIND HIM -- the kitchen door flies open. The Busser rushes out. Sprinting for the exit. Kay's right behind him.

KAY

Stop!

The Busser reaches for the door and --

A KNIFE hits right in front of him. He freezes. (Actually, everyone freezes.) Cameron takes off his blindfold.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAMERON

C'mon! No one leaves my show early.

The Busser turns back to Kay. She approaches.

KAY

It's okay. You're not in trouble.
You saw something, didn't you?

BUSSER

A truck. With a plane on it. There
were men, too. They said --

KAY

Don't worry about them. You're safe
now. Tell me: where did they go?

EXT. ENGINE FACTORY/INT. KAY'S CAR - LATER

Kay stares at the deserted factory. A MAN with a gun under
his jacket walks the perimeter. Kay's on her cell:

KAY

The witness led us to a factory
near the airport. There's an armed
guard outside. I'm sending details.

CAMERON

(as she hangs up)
So. What do you think of magic now?
After my show?

KAY

(barely listening)
You're amazing.

CAMERON

(a tad embarrassed)
Well, it's not really about me.
It's the craft, the skill. I should
warn you, many women find my
performance very captivating. They
can't resist it.

KAY

(super incredulous)
Magic?

CAMERON

Many women. Some. Not all...

KAY

I think we're okay.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Kay checks her gun. Opens the door.

CAMERON
You're not waiting?

KAY
Felix will bolt at the first sign
of backup.

CAMERON
I'll come with--

KAY
No. This isn't a diner. That man
over there has a gun. Stay here.

CAMERON
What about the illusionist? He's
probably inside. You need my help.

Click! Kay just HANDCUFFED him to the wheel.

KAY
Don't worry, I know a few tricks.

EXT. ENGINE FACTORY - MOMENTS LATER

Kay skulks up to a back door and picks the lock.

INT. ENGINE FACTORY - MOMENTS LATER

Kay goes down a hallway. Machine sounds in the distance. A
GUARD with a gun rounds a corner. She hides behind a door,
then follows him. He goes to a BREAK ROOM, where--

Kay sees her FLIGHT CREW eating CHINESE FOOD. They're alive
and smiling and working for Felix! Kay can't believe it.

A WHISPER
They're stooges.

She SPINS. Her GUN aimed at -- CAMERON.

CAMERON
They were in on it from the start.

KAY
What the hell are you doing?

CAMERON
Handcuffs, really? I'm an
accomplished escape artist.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAMERON (CONT'D)
 (off Kay's anger)
 I also found the plane.

INT. ENGINE FACTORY - HALLWAY/FACTORY FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

There it is - THE JET. Resting on a FLATBED TRUCK.

Kay and Cameron watch as MEN IN JUMPSUITS take it apart with SAWS. It's deafening. Felix's second in command -- ANDREI STANISLAV (40s, imposing) -- yells orders:

ANDREI
 We have two hours, gentlemen.

Kay pulls Cameron back from the door.

KAY
 Let's go. We gotta move.

Cameron nods and starts to move. Behind him, a door opens. FELIX RUIZ appears with two of his men. **He sees Cameron.**

KAY (CONT'D)
 Cameron -- get down!!!

Felix and his men reach for their weapons -- Kay OPENS FIRE. Two guys fly backward. Kay falls back, laying down fire. Covering Cameron as he runs through a labyrinth of halls.

Across the factory floor -- GIANT DOORS OPEN. Guards rush Felix to a car. They jump in and peel out, getting away.

EXT. ENGINE FACTORY - SAME

Cameron runs out into the sunlight. He's almost to the car. A door OPENS. He turns. There's ANDREI aiming a gun at him.

CAMERON
 Okay... I'm ready.

ANDREI
What?

CAMERON
 I. Am. Ready. I spent a year in Budapest learning how to catch a bullet. Prepare to be amazed.
 (Andrei lines up his shot)
 Just take your time. I'd prefer a head shot if that's at all poss--

BAM! Andrei hits the ground, shot in the arm. Kay stands behind him. In the distance, POLICE CARS race toward them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAY

What are you doing? You can't catch a bullet!

CAMERON

Of course I can't! Do you know how many magicians have died trying to catch bullets? Lots! That was crowd work. I knew he'd hesitate.

KAY

(as she cuffs Andrei)

I told you to wait in the car.

CAMERON

I was trying to help.

KAY

Yeah, you helped Felix get away.

(pissed at herself)

What was I thinking? I trusted *The Master of Deception*.

CAMERON

Look, mistakes were made...

KAY

What's the worst thing that happens if you make a mistake on stage?

CAMERON

I get hurt.

KAY

But the audience goes home? You don't hurt them, too?

CAMERON

Of course not.

KAY

Not here. When I screw up... people die. Innocent people. We're done, Cameron. If I see you anywhere near this case, I'll arrest you.

She holds up her badge to the approaching cops.

KAY (CONT'D)

Show's over.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. A LONELY ROAD - DAY

Cameron reads the FBI file, lost in thought. A RUMBLE builds as a BLACK MERCEDES JEEP (AMG G65 SUV) skids to a stop. You could invade Poland with this blacked-out, chrome-lined monstrosity. A door opens.

INT. GUNTER'S JEEP - CONTINUOUS

Cameron sits, still reading. Gunter drives, his muscles rippling with tension. Jordan's in the passenger seat, arms crossed, Nikes on the dash. Dina's next to Cameron in back.

DINA

What happened?

(he's lost in the file)

Cameron? What happened?

Still nothing. Gunter loses it --

GUNTER

He's running around with the FBI!

Ach du lieber himmel!

JORDAN

And here comes the German.

CAMERON

I'm not crazy. We found the plane from the news. It didn't blow up. It disappeared. Just like our ABC special. Guys, this is the illusionist who framed Jonathan. He's calling us out.

JORDAN

Dude, we all wish Jonathan was here. He's family. But you're acting legit crazy. You're not a cop. Trust me, I know cops.

GUNTER

Du bist ein idiot!

CAMERON

I'm not an idiot. And why say it in German if we all know idiot?

DINA

Everyone, let's stay constructive.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GUNTER

Let's not! I'm pissed. We're all pissed! This doesn't sound like a new show.

JORDAN

Or exciting ideas.

CAMERON

Wait. What are you saying?

DINA

They're signing with Criss Angel.

CAMERON

You're leaving me for the Mindfreak?

GUNTER

The offer is generous, the benefits package -- exemplary.

CAMERON

But I'm better.

JORDAN

Dude, the Mindfreak has a show. He isn't running around looking for missing airplanes.

GUNTER

Cameron. You're an illusionist. The FBI doesn't need you.

Cameron smacks the folder shut.

CAMERON

That's it!

GUNTER

Don't you yell at me!

CAMERON

No, I mean. Du hast es geschafft! You did it. Don't sign with Angel. Give me a day.

JORDAN

Why would we do that?

CAMERON

Because the FBI doesn't need me -- *they need Cameron Black.*

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CAMERON (CONT'D)
 (off their looks)
 It'll make sense. Promise.

INT. FBI HQ - DAY

Kay marches down a hall. Mike runs up to her.

MIKE
 Kay -- the flight crew says they
 were hired by Andrei.
 (looking around)
 What happened to Cameron?

KAY
 He's gone. Where's Andrei?

MIKE
 Interrogation 3.

KAY
 He's mine. No interruptions.

She bursts through a door --

INT. FBI HQ - INTERROGATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Andrei (his arm in a sling) looks up. Kay comes in hot.

KAY
 Andrei. You've worked for the
 Sinaloa Cartel. The Bratva before
 that. You know the deal -- talk to
 me and you're safe. Felix wanted to
 disappear, didn't he?
 (nothing)
 But he needs money. That's why he's
 still here -- to see Dominic
 Prince. Where is he?

ANDREI
 Felix is gone.

KAY
 He speaks! Good, practice that.
 Felix can't run until he meets
 Dominic. If you don't know where
 Felix is, give me Dominic.
 (nothing)
 I'll find him, Andrei. One more
 chance. *Where is Dominic Prince?*

Mike knocks on the door. Kay, pissed, opens it:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

Dominic Prince is here for you.

INT. FBI HQ - CONFERENCE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

DOMINIC PRINCE (40s, imposing, well dressed) waits. Kay enters with Steve. Mike waits by the door. The vibe? Tense.

STEVE

(quietly, to Kay)

I'll take the lead.

She nods and they sit down.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Mr. Prince. What do we owe the pleasure?

DOMINIC

My relationship with Felix Ruiz has recently deteriorated. I'm offering my services to help you find him.

STEVE

In exchange for?

DOMINIC

Full immunity from prosecution and a new life. Far from here.

KAY

(incredulous)

Mr. Prince, you've been a banker for the cartels for twenty years, are you really telling us you don't have enough money for protection?

Steve coughs. Kay backs off.

STEVE

Alright. We're interested. What happens next is we go to Justice and seek an immunity agreement--

As Steve talks, Kay can't take her eyes off Dominic. His hands. He flips a pin around. Then his face. His eyebrows. She glances at his hair. *Something's wrong.* She checks her folder, a picture of Dominic. Steve notices. She whispers:

KAY

Intel spotted him two weeks ago. With a new haircut.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEVE

What are you saying?

DOMINIC

That I'm not Dominic Prince.
(his voice changes)
But I still think this worked.

Suddenly, Dominic Prince is **Cameron Black in disguise.**

KAY

What the hell are you doing?

CAMERON/DOMINIC

A proof of concept. That I could do
it -- trick you.

MIKE

(in awe, a fan)
That is amazing. How did you...?

STEVE

Who the hell is this?

MIKE

(suddenly professional)
It's Cameron Black. The magician.

CAMERON/DOMINIC

Felix used a master illusionist to
escape. I propose you catch him
with your own master of illusion.
(off their confusion)
Me. I'm talking about me. Was that
not clear? Here, I sketched the
whole plan out in the lobby.

He unfolds a NAPKIN on the table. There's an impossibly
detailed diagram on it. It only makes Steve more pissed.

STEVE

Get him out of here. None of this
leaves the room.

Steve marches out. Kay stares at Cameron. She's furious.

KAY

Don't talk. Don't say a word.
(re: the makeup)
You're going to wipe that off your
face, then Mike is going to escort
you to the lobby and you're going
to leave this building forever.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

She shakes her head and goes. Mike feels a little bad.

MIKE

It's a great disguise.

CAMERON/DOMINIC

It's all Dina, my producer. She started in effects makeup, 3D printed prosthetics. She can make me look like anyone.

(a beat, re: Kay)

I really thought I could help.

MIKE

It's not only you. Kay grew up in Mexico. Near the border. She knows what these guys can do.

INT. FBI HQ - BULLPEN - SAME

Kay rubs her eyes. Pissed. Across the bullpen, agents escort ANDREI from the INTERROGATION ROOM. He looks at her with a confident sneer. Her eyes flip back to the conference room and Cameron -- an idea forming. Mike's handing Cameron a box of tissues, he's about to wipe off the disguise. Kay moves--

INT. FBI HQ - CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

She opens the door. Cameron looks up --

KAY

Stop. Don't do that. Stand up and follow me and don't say a word.

INT. FBI HQ - BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

Kay exits with Cameron/Dominic and Mike. Andrei clocks them. Suddenly, his confidence evaporates.

ANDREI

Dominic?

Cameron freezes. Kay steps between them.

KAY

Don't say anything, Mr. Prince.
(to Mike)
Get him down to WITSEC.

Mike pushes Cameron out of frame, leaving Andrei shaken.

ANDREI

Dominic! *What are you doing?*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAY

Your boss knows what happens when you let Felix down. If you want the same deal he got, I suggest you start talking *now*.

Andrei watches Cameron/Dominic go. He nods -- *I'll talk*.

INT. FBI HQ - SITUATION ROOM - LATER

Cameron sits by himself, wiping off the last bits of disguise. A door opens. Kay enters with Mike and Steve.

CAMERON

Kay! Before you fire me again, I want to apologize. I know I broke some very important rules, perhaps even a few laws. You deserve better from your consulting illusionist.

KAY

Thank you, Cameron.

CAMERON

Am I going to jail now? They said I couldn't leave.

STEVE

Andrei gave us everything, Mr. Black. Felix is still in Los Angeles. He's set to meet with Dominic Prince tomorrow.

CAMERON

It worked! My disguise worked!

KAY

There's a problem. Felix is keeping mobile, constantly switching cars.

MIKE

He's also got a small army of mercenaries protecting him. If we try to arrest him, it'll be a bloodbath.

CAMERON

Well, my offer still stands. I can use the Dominic disguise to get close. Then, we do this!

Cameron opens up his napkin. Excited. Steve regards it -- he's not sold but definitely intrigued.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAY

Steve, listen. I realize he's undisciplined and irritating. But he figured out the hangar. He helped me get to the factory.

CAMERON

I also found the plane!
(off Kay's disapproval)
Still upset? Okay, scratch that.

KAY

Andrei was inches from him and he thought Cameron was Dominic. We can trap Felix without a shot being fired.

Steve turns the napkin around. Even more intrigued...

STEVE

Alright. How do we do that?

CAMERON

With deception.

INT. CAMERON'S ARCHIVE OF ILLUSION - LATER

Doors open to reveal a GIANT WAREHOUSE/MUSEUM. Artifacts from ancient illusions rest next to classic props and hundred-year-old magic posters. Houdini's version of a Batcave. Cameron leads Mike and Kay--

CAMERON

Welcome to the Archive of Illusion!
I've collected these treasures from
all over the world.

As they walk through pools of light, it definitely feels like someone's in those shadows with them.

MIKE

Do you have that iron maiden thing
Houdini used to break out of?

CAMERON

No. Copperfield's got it. Man's a
tyrant.

Cameron pushes through a door --

INT. THE ARCHIVE OF ILLUSION - LABORATORY - CONTINUOUS

If the museum is dusty, this is a high-tech clean room. All the newest tech and industrial equipment. 3-D printers, SFX gear, and computers. Q's lab if David Blaine was 007. Already here are DINA and GUNTER, who pets a rather large CAT.

GUNTER

We gave you time, Cameron. Just know -- Criss Angel is texting Jordan and me like a teenage girl.

CAMERON

Thank you for coming. And not pissing your talents away.

DINA

You said something about a gig?

Wait, that's not a cat. **Gunter's petting a BABY TIGER.**

MIKE

Is that real?

GUNTER

Her name is Naomi. Who are these people? They're not producers.

JORDAN (O.S.)

They're FBI agents.

Jordan enters. He's holding Kay and Mike's wallets.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

Kay Alvarez and Mike Daniels. What have you gotten us into, boss?

The Feds check for their wallets. Jordan tosses them back.

CAMERON

Guys. This is Gunter Gustafsen, world's greatest illusion builder. Dina, my producer-slash-make up genius. And Jordan Monroe... street magician extraordinaire. He helps me come up with ideas. I had no idea he was a pickpocket.

JORDAN

What about that super model? You asked me to pickpocket her phone, get her number, so you could--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAMERON

Hah. That's really not something we need to tell the FBI. Alright--

Cameron spreads out his NAPKIN. Everyone leans in--

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Here's the gig. We're going to help the FBI capture Felix Ruiz.

(re: the napkin)

Gunter: I need cars, wild walls, fire, and... just keep reading.

Jordan: work up a person swap into a Slydini. Dina: Can you do Dominic's face again? Kay has notes on the eyebrows and hair. And we need this by tomorrow.

GUNTER

(he turns to go)

I'm calling Criss Angel.

CAMERON

Gunter, please. It's a three-card monte into a deck-switch.

GUNTER

With actual cars in rush hour traffic in Los Angeles. **It's impossible!**

CAMERON

That's what we do!

DINA

No. This is real life.

JORDAN

The Sinaloa? These are some scary people, man. You didn't grow up with them. This trick goes sideways, you're dead.

KAY

That won't happen. I've got a hundred special agents and the LAPD ready to lock this down. Whatever you need, you'll get.

CAMERON

I realize I haven't been there for you. And I'm difficult and narcissistic. But this...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CAMERON (CONT'D)
 this could help Jonathan. You said
 it -- he's family.

He looks to Jordan and Gunter and Dina--

JORDAN
 Cool. I'm in.

GUNTER
 (kissing his tiger)
 Naomi says yes. So ja.

Cameron notices Dina's heavy silence--

CAMERON
 Are you okay with this? I know he
 broke your--

DINA
 It's more than that.
 (a beat)
 I can't lose both of you.

CAMERON
 You won't. Trust me.

She nods. *Okay.* Cameron grabs his bag, about to leave--

KAY
 Where are you going?

CAMERON
 There's one more person.

INT. VISITING ROOM - LATER

Austere. Institutional. Cameron's alone. He draws up more of the plan. There are TWO NAPKINS now. He checks his watch. Looks around. He's been here awhile. The room is empty. He goes back to writing. Then he stops, sensing someone's here--

CAMERON
 Hello, Jonathan.

We PAN AROUND to reveal JONATHAN BLACK standing behind Cameron. It's like he appeared out of nowhere. He looks different: tense, gaunt. He's been here a long time.

JONATHAN
 Ta-dah.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. PRISON VISITING ROOM - NIGHT

Jonathan stares at Cameron as he lays out the napkins.

CAMERON

I may have found your illusionist.
He helped a drug dealer escape from
the FBI. I designed a plan to trap
him. It's a *Chung Ling Soo* into an
Auto-Slydini. If you could look at
it--

Jonathan regards it. The vibe is tense.

JONATHAN

I already have a plan.

CAMERON

(quiet)
That plan's insane.

Cameron watches his brother scan the napkin.

JONATHAN

This won't work.

CAMERON

Then tell me what I'm missing.

JONATHAN

We should go with my plan.

CAMERON

I'm not breaking you out of here.
They'd come after us. Our lives
would be over. The show would--

JONATHAN

I'm in here because of your show.

CAMERON

Our show. Don't do this. We can't
have this argument again.

JONATHAN

You never were good with guilt.

CAMERON

(a beat, then quiet)
This isn't even about me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JONATHAN

Yes, dad was a monster. He forced us to be one person. But you were only too happy to play his part. When I wanted out, you begged me to stay. One more tour, one more special. I was trapped in your life. And you wouldn't let me go. That's why I was in New York. That's why I'm here now. There's only one guilty man in this room. It's not me.

The brothers stare at each other.

CAMERON

It's good. Good speech.

JONATHAN

Thank you.

CAMERON

You've been working on it?

JONATHAN

'bout six months. Off-and-on.

CAMERON

Are you really saying you won't help me get you out of here?

JONATHAN

You stopped performing. Why?

CAMERON

What does that have to do with anything?

(Jonathan waits)

No one wants to see the show.

JONATHAN

That's not it.

CAMERON

Read the internet. People hate us.

JONATHAN

It's all the same. Why you couldn't let me go, why you can't perform, why you're here right now. Admit it and I'll help you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CAMERON

(a long beat)

Every trick, every escape... we designed them together. I could look at you and know it'd work.

(the truth)

I need you.

Jonathan leans back, judging his brother.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Please, tell me what's missing?

JONATHAN

Do you remember *Bishop's Vision*?

Cameron nods. Jonathan grabs the napkin and a pen.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

Show this to Gunter.

CAMERON

(watching him write)

That's great.

JONATHAN

There's one more twist to consider.

What if this isn't *your* trap?

(off Cameron's anxiety)

What if it's a trap *for you*?

INT. OFFICE BUILDING/FBI BASE OF OPERATIONS - MORNING

The team preps for the mission. Kay and Mike coordinate with an army of agents.

KAY

Listen up! We've got cars in the field but no helicopters. Felix's people see us in the air and he's gone. They'll scan Cameron so no trackers or bugs. We follow him by sight.

Nearby, the Illusion Team preps in a makeshift DRESSING ROOM. Dina works on Cameron's "Dominic face."

DINA

Stop sweating, you'll ruin it.

CAMERON

Great, a Dina pep talk. I knew I was feeling too good about this.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DINA
You've got this.

Gunter and Jordan check Cameron's outfit.

GUNTER
We're ready.

JORDAN
Bring it home, boss.

Kay enters, all business--

KAY
Can I have a second?
(the team goes)
Cameron, I need to know -- is this
going to work?

CAMERON
Relax. The show must--

KAY
Don't say that. Felix won't
hesitate to kill you. If there's
any chance--

CAMERON
It's going to work. And I have to
do this, Kay. It's personal.

KAY
Okay. I get it.

CAMERON
(before she can go)
It's personal for you, too.

KAY
(a beat)
My father was a police captain in
Tijuana. When I was nine, he was
assassinated by the Sinaloa.

CAMERON
Felix's cartel?

KAY
To him, Captain Eduardo Alvarez was
just a name on a list. A cop who
wouldn't take their money.

CAMERON
The illusion will work, Kay. We'll
get him.

EXT. DOWNTOWN PLAZA - DAY

The REAL DOMINIC PRINCE marches toward the street with his ARMED SECURITY GUARD. Angelenos whip past. An ATTRACTIVE TOURIST stumbles up on crazy high heels and bumps into the guard. She has a southern accent.

TOURIST

I'm so sorry! Where are my manners?
Could you help me find myself here?

Wait -- the Tourist is DINA! She unfolds a GIANT MAP. Blocking the guard's view of Dominic.

JORDAN -- in a business suit -- slips between them, glides past Dominic, and PICKPOCKETS his phone.

JORDAN

(nerdy voice)
Pardon me, sir.

Then tosses it to --

CAMERON, in full DISGUISE. He looks exactly like Dominic Prince. In a perfectly choreographed dance, he walks right past Dominic as ANOTHER MAN blocks his way. The guard steps up to a BLACK LIMO and opens the back door. Cameron gets in. The Guard gets in. The car pulls out.

The real Dominic Prince sees this. He's completely confused/pissed... the man who blocked him smiles. It's SPECIAL AGENT MIKE DANIELS.

MIKE

Mr. Prince. Please come with me.
(then into his radio)
The package is delivered.

EXT. DOWNTOWN STREETS - SAME

Traffic is heavy but moving. Cameron's black limo makes quick turns. Not far behind it -- a BLUE CHRYSLER 300 SEDAN.

INT. KAY'S SEDAN - SAME

She's in the passenger seat. Her walkie in hand:

KAY

Copy that. Target vehicle is heading north toward Grand. No one moves in without my go-ahead.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She spots other SEDANS. Other AGENTS behind the wheels. Radio chatter reports back. They're all tracking--

INT. BLACK LIMO - SAME

Cameron sits in the back. The Driver goes fast. The Guard scans a wand over Cameron's suit. Gets a green light.

GUARD

He's clean. Go for transfer.

INT. UNDERGROUND GARAGE - MOMENTS LATER

They screech to a stop in a dark underground garage. FIVE IDENTICAL SUVs wait. The Guard opens his door and Cameron walks to an SUV. Gets into the back seat.

INT. SUV - CONTINUOUS

But there's no Felix. Doors close. And they're moving again.

INT. KAY'S SEDAN - SAME

Kay watches with her team as FIVE IDENTICAL SUVs pull out of the garage. They go in different directions.

KAY

I count five target vehicles. Was there a switch?

FBI AGENTS (OVER THE RADIO)

We can't confirm!

KAY

Damnit! Follow them all. Repeat, follow them all!

INT. SUV - SAME

Cameron glances out the window. *Where's Kay?* He doesn't feel safe. Felix's men are pros. They race through side streets, making certain no one is following. They SCREECH to a stop.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Doors open. Hands push Cameron to another SUV.

INT. FELIX'S SUV - CONTINUOUS

Cameron gets in. FELIX RUIZ casually sits across from him. TWO heavily armed men are up front. A THIRD MAN sits behind Cameron in the third row. Doors close and they're moving.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FELIX
Hello, Dominic.

CAMERON/DOMINIC
(raspy)
Felix.

This is it. He's looking at his most dangerous audience yet.

INT. KAY'S CAR - SAME

Kay is dealing with multiple vehicles.

KAY
Wait, it looks like one of the SUVs
stopped. Did any of the others
stop? Was there another switch?

She sees TWO SUVs now, going in different directions. Which
does she follow? She yells into her walkie:

KAY (CONT'D)
There was a switch! They're ahead
of us. We need to slow this down.

INT. FELIX'S SUV - SAME

Felix observes Cameron/Dominic, who nervously coughs.

FELIX
You look ill.

CAMERON/DOMINIC
It's a cold. Can't shake it.

FELIX
Thank you for transferring my
accounts. But I still have one
small problem.

CAMERON/DOMINIC
What problem?

Wham! The man behind Cameron grabs him by the neck, wrenches
him over the seat. BLACK DUCT TAPE stretches across his eyes.
Cameron tries to yell. The guard chokes back his cries.

FELIX
You know I'm alive.

Screech! They jerk to a stop. Felix looks out the front, sees
a TRAFFIC JAM. A PRIUS blocks the turn. He doesn't like this.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FELIX (CONT'D)

Where'd this come from? **Move them.**

The TWO MEN up front get out. They start yelling at the woman in the Prius. Cameron struggles to talk:

CAMERON/DOMINIC

Don't do this...

Felix looks back. *That's not Dominic's voice.*

CAMERON/DOMINIC (CONT'D)

I'm not Dominic. I'm a magician!

Felix, suddenly paranoid, watches the street. The guard loosens his hold. Cameron has a chance. He KICKS BACK and knocks the guard into the third row. Whack! His shoe connects with Felix's face. Cameron reaches for the back door handle. It swings open. THE GUARD FALLS OUT. He closes the door.

Felix recovers and lurches at Cameron. They struggle. Their legs kicking the gun around on the floor. Felix reaches for it while Cameron jumps into the driver's seat. He clicks the lock button. The guards outside can't get in. He drops the SUV into REVERSE and hits the gas.

All while blindfolded!

EXT. DOWNTOWN LA STREETS - INTERCUT

They fly up on a curb. Ka-chunking into cars behind them, Cameron makes a hole. Then he punches the gas and ROCKETS DOWN a big street. Sideswiping taxis and trucks. Felix finally grabs his gun and aims it at Cameron's head.

FELIX

Stop! You can't see.

Still BLINDFOLDED, Cameron only goes faster as he weaves through streets at sixty miles an hour.

CAMERON/DOMINIC

Don't worry!

(making this up)

I memorized the route on the way here.

FELIX

I'll shoot you.

Cameron smiles, taking turns like a mad man.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAMERON/DOMINIC
Bad idea at this speed! Tell me
when to turn! Now? Now? Or now?

FELIX
(seeing a bus)
NOW!

Cameron throws the wheels and they head down another street.

CAMERON/DOMINIC
Oh this is much better.

FELIX
Veer right! Watch out!

CAMERON/DOMINIC
Watch out doesn't help me!

Felix's eyes go wide. There's CONSTRUCTION up ahead. They're heading right for a TRACTOR. He screams!

CAMERON/DOMINIC (CONT'D)
Why are we screaming?!?

The SUV SMASHES into the tractor. It flies into the air. Now Cameron's screaming, too. They FLIP OVER way too many times. Finally, scraping to a stop in the middle of --

EXT. BROADWAY - CONTINUOUS

Cameron climbs out through broken glass. He peels the tape off his face. Ow that hurts! It also takes off the disguise. He waves to the cop cars in the distance. There's Kay!

Glass crunches behind him. Felix jabs his gun into Cameron's back. He looks left -- the FIRE from the crash spreads to a nearby fuel truck. Then right -- the ALLEYWAY up ahead is clear. Felix forces Cameron toward it.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - SAME

Felix pushes Cameron away from the street and the cops.

CAMERON
Listen, you should stop. You're not
going to get away.

FELIX
(heading to a turn)
You don't know me. That way.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAMERON

I know you hired an illusionist to
disappear the plane. Who was it?

Felix stops. That turn he was going toward -- it's gone!

FELIX

Where's the...

He looks back and the STREET IS GONE. It's now a dead end.

KAY (O.S.)

Felix Ruiz. You're surrounded.

There's no one there. He backs them into another alley.

CAMERON

A magician? An illusionist? How'd
you find them? Give me a name!

They turn down a final passageway. A DEAD END. Felix turns
back. They're blocked by a wall that just appeared there.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

We call it the Illusion of Choice.
You think you have all these
choices. But you don't. They all
lead to the same place. The only
thing left to do -- give up.

Felix takes a breath. Then -- **he aims his gun at Cameron.**

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Or do that.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

EXT. ALLEYWAY - DIRECT PICKUP

Felix aims his gun at Cameron, who only has time to say --

CAMERON

The illusionist who helped you
escape -- Who was he? I'm gonna
die, might as well tell me.

Suddenly, Kay appears. Her gun aimed at Felix.

KAY

Drop it, Felix! I will kill you.

Cameron holds up his hand.

CAMERON

I've got this, Kay. Trust me, every
magician can catch a bullet.

(to Felix)

Who was the illusionist?

FELIX

La hechicera. Con los ojos mágicos.

CAMERON

Wait. What does that mean?

KAY

Put the gun down!

CAMERON

Don't worry, Kay. I've--

BLAM! Felix FIRES! Cameron throws his hand up and CATCHES THE BULLET! Holy shit! He did it. Felix can't believe it. He drops his gun in shock. Kay races up.

KAY

Felix Ruiz, you're under arrest.
You have the right to remain
silent...

She cuffs him, reads off his rights. Felix watches in awe as Cameron opens his hand to reveal -- the smoking bullet.

FELIX

Who are you?

KAY

He isn't your concern.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FELIX

Not him.
 (his eyes lock onto her)
 Who are you?

KAY

Alvarez. Special Agent Alvarez.

Felix hears the name. The gears of his memory click into place. The drug dealer regards the FBI agent.

FELIX

Eduardo's girl. He'd be proud.

KAY

You knew him?

FELIX

I'm sorry. I have the right to remain silent.

Kay nods and Mike pulls him away. Cameron approaches--

KAY

Your brother was right about the illusionist.

CAMERON

What?

KAY

La hechicera. Con los ojos mágicos.
 The sorceress with magic eyes.

CAMERON

(realizing)
 The woman in the car with Jonathan.
 She was the illusionist all along.

INT. THE ARCHIVE OF ILLUSION - LATER

It's an after party. With FBI agents. The teams gather, Cameron's and Kay's. Music plays. Kay enters--

KAY

What is this?

CAMERON

Don't you throw a wrap party after you catch somebody?

KAY

No. But we should.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DINA
How's Felix?

KAY
Not well. Dominic Prince just
turned state's evidence against
him.
(everyone cheers)
Congratulations, Cameron.

CAMERON
I couldn't have done it without my
beautiful assistant.

KAY
(an edgy smile)
Don't ever say that again.

CAMERON
Totally get that. It felt weird
coming out. Here's to all of us. A
great team. Cheers!

A FEW SONGS LATER. Mike's having fun, on his third drink. He
goes up to Cameron--

MIKE
Hey, I didn't want to say this
before but I'm a big fan.

CAMERON
You don't say.

MIKE
Seen the specials, grew up on
Copperfield, love it all. But that
bullet catch. That was incredible.
How did you do that?

CAMERON
I didn't.

MIKE
That wasn't real?

Cameron's team pops into frame. Dina first --

DINA
We don't do real. We do illusions.
Based on your interrogation, we
knew what kind of gun Felix used
and printed a 3D replica.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

We FLASH POP to Dina poring over a file, programming the 3D printer, then examining the replica--

JORDAN

Then Cameron and I figured out a way to switch the guns.

More POPS of Cameron struggling with Felix in the SUV. The real gun hits the floor. He kicks it away, then the replica drops from an ankle holster. Felix grabs it--

MIKE

But the bullet was smoking hot.

The last POP is Gunter at his bench working on something small. A BULLET. He shakes it and it smokes. He smiles.

GUNTER

Gag bullet. I tricked out a round to heat up when Cameron shook it.

CAMERON

Do you want to know how the blindfold drive worked? I didn't memorize the route.

MIKE

Okay, stop. Now you're just ruining magic.

Everyone laughs. Even Mike.

INT. THE ARCHIVE OF ILLUSION - LATER

Kay finds Cameron in the archive, looking at a FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH. It's of him and Jonathan, happier times.

KAY

So what's next? You go after the mysterious woman with different color eyes? By yourself?

CAMERON

I still have to prove she did it.

KAY

What about your team? I take it they can't wait around for you.

CAMERON

No, they need a real magician.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAY

That's too bad. It was an impressive trick, catching Felix.

CAMERON

You're starting to like magic?

KAY

Not me, Washington. Felix wasn't the first. The best criminals have realized their phones and computers aren't safe. So they're using disguises, secret compartments, codes, analog solutions to complex problems. And we're not ready.

(a beat)

We need help.

CAMERON

(with a grin)

You're talking about a new show.

KAY

Um. No. Washington wants a new *team*. Capable of cracking any deception and outdoing it with their own.

CAMERON

It's great! They solve cases by deceiving criminals. And the illusionist -- someone like me, perhaps? -- he'd be the leader.

KAY

I'd be in charge.

CAMERON

Sure, of course. We can work out the details later.

INT. PRISON VISITING ROOM - LATER

An excited Cameron retells the story to Jonathan.

CAMERON

They're calling it The Deception Group. Kay promised she'd help with your case, too. They want everyone. Jordan, Gunter, Dina--

JONATHAN

Dina said yes?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAMERON

She hasn't given up on you. You shouldn't either. That life that was stolen from you... we can get it back. But I can't do it without you. Jonathan?

Jonathan stares at the ceiling.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

What is it? What are you thinking?

JONATHAN

She copied our trick. The same smoke, the same jet. Everything except the ending. When we made our plane vanish, what did we leave?

CAMERON

A deck of cards...

INT. HANGAR - NIGHT

The doors open. It's deserted. Cameron finds the burned-out plane parts marked and labeled on long tables. He walks down them, scanning each bag. He reaches the end of a table. There, in a small plastic bag, is a DECK OF BICYCLE PLAYING CARDS. He opens the bag. Takes the deck out.

But it's not a deck of cards. It's a CELLPHONE CASE. He looks at the charred phone. His thumb touches the home button. There's no way it... the screen ACTIVATES, it makes a call --

MYSTERY WOMAN'S VOICE

Hello, Cameron.

CAMERON

(holding up the phone)
Where are you?

INT. FRANKFURT AIRPORT - INTERCUT

It's crowded. We FOLLOW a WOMAN through the international terminal. Killer heels, long coat with a high fur collar. Serious men flank her. Her guards. She talks on the phone.

MYSTERY WOMAN

I'm not going to come out and tell you. Where's the fun in that?

CAMERON

What do you want? Why are you doing this?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MYSTERY WOMAN

Always asking the wrong questions.
That's why you're so easy to fool.

CAMERON

Who are you?

MYSTERY WOMAN

You don't remember me. Don't worry,
I don't blame you for that. But
I've thought about you and Jonathan
for years. New York was only the
first step. The show is about to
begin. Are you ready?

We PAN AROUND to reveal HER EYES. ONE BLUE, ONE GREEN. She
waits for Cameron to respond. He doesn't.

MYSTERY WOMAN (CONT'D)

Cameron?

We stay with her until he finally answers.

CAMERON

You're in the Frankfurt
International terminal.

She stops. Looks over her shoulder. Her guards react--

CAMERON (CONT'D)

I spent the last twelve months
flying around the world. The
acoustics of an airport are as
distinct as an opera house. And
Frankfurt pumps Muzak Beethoven
like they're afraid someone might
forget he's German.

(a beat)

Tell me, did you look over your
shoulder?

KAY appears behind Cameron in the hangar. She approaches...

MYSTERY WOMAN

Goodbye, Cameron.

CAMERON

Get used to looking...
(seeing Kay, emboldened)
We're coming for you.

END OF PILOT